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Missouri's Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rate Decreases Slightly in December

According to the Department of Economic Development, Missouri's seasonally adjusted unemployment figure took an unexpected drop in December, falling three-tenths of a point to 4.4 percent. However, employment losses continued despite signs of improvement in some industries.

The unadjusted unemployment rate remained unchanged from November's figure of 4.3 percent. The increase in unadjusted unemployment that usually occurs in December, when early winter conditions begin to take their toll on various activities, did not materialize this year, causing the seasonally adjusted rate to fall.

"We are pleased to see a decline in the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate, but we will continue to keep an eye on the state of employment as we continue to work through this economic downturn," said DED Director Joseph L. Driskill.

Despite this unexpected decrease, the seasonally adjusted rate is still a full percentage point higher than it was a year earlier, before the nation's economy went into recession. And Missouri's unadjusted unemployment rate remains well below the nation's, which was 5.4 percent in December.

About 125,900 Missourians were estimated to have been jobless in December (not seasonally adjusted). Non-farm payroll employment decreased by 6,400 on a seasonally adjusted basis, to 2,713,700. Some decrease in employment is usual in December, but the continuing effects of the recession have led to additional decreases. Once again, manufacturing employment was down, but only by 400 jobs to 375,900 (seasonally adjusted).

On a not-seasonally adjusted basis, payroll employment was down by 11,200 jobs, but manufacturing employment actually increased for the second straight month. Employment in the motor vehicles and equipment industry was down by 1,000 jobs, but most other reported manufacturing industries were either unchanged or added a small number of jobs.

Construction employment was down by 5,800 jobs over the month. Much of this decrease was seasonal, but apparently not all, as seasonally adjusted employment decreased by 1,000. Construction employment has generally held up well during the recession, partly because the housing sector was remaining a source of strength. Until recently, low mortgage rates helped keep both new construction and refinancing activity high.

Business services, which has been the industry outside manufacturing hardest hit by the recession, experienced a gain of 2,000 jobs in December, on a seasonally adjusted basis. Generally small losses in other service industries partly offset this and other gains, so that the net increase in services was only 700 jobs. Retail trade employment fell by 6,000 jobs, on a seasonally adjusted basis, as holiday hiring was generally weaker than usual.

Over the past year, Missouri payrolls have lost 47,600 jobs, or 1.7 percent. More than half this job loss – 24,800 jobs – has been in the manufacturing sector, where Missouri has been one of the hardest hit states. Private service-producing employment is down as well, by 32,500 jobs spread across most industry groups. Construction employment is up by 6,000 jobs over the year, and local governments, including public schools, have added 5,000 jobs.

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MISSOURI UNEMPLOYMENT RATES
FOR METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREAS (MSAs), LABOR MARKET AREAS (LMAs), AND COUNTIES
CURRENT MONTH (DECEMBER 2001), PREVIOUS TWO MONTHS (OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2001), AND YEAR AGO (DECEMBER 2001)

	DEC 2001	NOV 2001	OCT 2001	DEC 2000		DEC 2001	NOV 2001	OCT 2001	DEC 2000
U.S. (not seasonally adjusted)	5.4	5.3	5.0	3.7	Atchison	2.6	2.7	2.2	1.9
MISSOURI	4.3	4.3	4.0	3.2	Audrain	3.4	3.7	3.9	2.9
ST. LOUIS MSA	4.4	4.5	4.5	3.6	Barton	3.6	3.3	2.7	2.7
Franklin	4.5	4.4	6.5	4.3	Bates	5.7	5.6	5.0	5.3
Jefferson	4.1	4.1	5.1	3.7	Benton	8.7	8.9	6.9	7.2
Lincoln	4.5	4.4	3.9	3.1	Caldwell	6.4	5.9	4.7	4.0
St. Charles	3.1	3.2	2.9	1.9	Carroll	4.2	3.9	3.4	3.3
St. Louis County	3.5	3.6	3.7	2.6	Cedar	4.3	4.1	3.2	4.0
Warren	4.8	4.4	4.3	3.5	Chariton	5.0	6.0	5.9	4.5
St. Louis City	7.4	7.8	7.3	5.9	Clark	6.9	7.3	6.8	4.7
KANSAS CITY MSA	3.9	4.2	3.9	2.9	Cooper	5.5	5.4	4.9	3.7
Cass	3.1	3.2	3.0	2.5	Crawford	6.1	6.1	6.2	6.1
Clay	2.9	2.9	2.5	1.8	Dade	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.9
Clinton	3.3	3.3	2.6	2.6	Dallas	8.9	7.4	5.8	6.3
Jackson	4.4	4.6	4.2	3.2	Daviess	4.1	3.9	3.4	3.9
Lafayette	3.6	3.6	3.3	2.8	DeKalb	4.1	4.0	2.8	3.5
Platte	2.9	2.9	2.4	1.7	Dent	7.9	7.9	6.5	6.7
Ray	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.7	Douglas	11.8	11.1	9.8	7.5
SPRINGFIELD MSA	3.1	3.1	2.7	2.3	Dunklin	7.0	6.2	5.4	6.2
Christian	3.1	2.9	2.5	2.1	Gasconade	4.6	4.8	5.9	4.0
Greene	3.1	3.1	2.7	2.2	Gentry	3.1	3.4	2.9	2.6
Webster	3.6	3.7	3.1	3.1	Grundy	4.6	4.4	4.0	2.8
JOPLIN MSA	4.0	4.1	3.9	3.1	Harrison	3.3	2.9	2.1	3.0
Jasper	3.8	3.8	3.4	2.9	Henry	5.4	5.4	4.5	3.6
Newton	4.4	4.8	4.9	3.4	Hickory	8.6	8.0	6.7	9.3
COLUMBIA MSA	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.1	Holt	3.3	3.4	2.6	3.0
Boone	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.1	Howard	4.6	4.4	4.2	3.8
ST. JOSEPH MSA	5.1	5.2	4.8	3.3	Iron	7.5	7.2	5.9	6.7
Andrew	4.3	4.1	3.7	3.1	Johnson	3.1	3.1	2.8	2.5
Buchanan	5.2	5.4	5.0	3.3	Knox	2.9	3.2	2.7	5.0
ADAIR-SCHUYLER LMA	2.8	4.6	2.4	3.2	Laclede	6.1	6.0	4.7	4.5
Adair	2.7	4.6	2.5	2.7	Lewis	4.1	4.3	3.0	3.3
Schuyler	3.7	5.0	1.8	6.1	Linn	7.9	10.7	11.1	7.1
BUTLER-CARTER-RIPLEY LMA	5.9	6.2	5.3	4.8	Livingston	2.9	2.8	2.9	2.6
Butler	5.6	5.5	4.7	4.7	McDonald	5.2	5.3	5.1	3.5
Carter	7.0	6.5	5.2	5.7	Macon	7.0	7.4	6.3	6.7
Ripley	6.4	8.5	7.2	4.9	Madison	8.9	8.3	7.3	6.6
CAMDEN-MILLER LMA	7.7	6.5	4.2	5.6	Mercer	4.5	3.9	2.9	3.5
Camden	7.8	6.5	4.1	5.5	Monroe	5.9	5.6	5.4	5.0
Miller	7.4	6.6	4.4	5.8	Montgomery	5.8	5.1	5.0	3.7
CAPE GIRARDEAU-SCOTT-NEW MADRID LMA	5.0	5.0	4.4	3.9	Morgan	8.1	7.3	5.6	6.8
Bollinger	8.9	8.9	8.0	4.5	Nodaway	1.3	1.2	0.9	1.3
Cape Girardeau	3.1	3.2	3.2	2.6	Ozark	6.5	5.6	4.4	5.3
Mississippi	8.8	8.2	6.8	8.2	Pemiscot	9.5	9.1	7.0	8.2
New Madrid	7.1	6.8	5.1	5.2	Perry	2.8	3.4	2.9	2.3
Scott	5.2	5.8	4.6	4.2	Pettis	7.1	7.6	6.6	3.2
COLE-CALLAWAY-MONITEAU LMA	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.2	Pike	5.2	5.1	4.8	3.5
Callaway	3.5	3.3	2.8	2.3	Polk	3.9	3.9	3.3	2.7
Cole	2.2	2.2	2.2	1.7	Pulaski	5.3	5.1	4.9	5.6
Moniteau	3.7	3.6	3.0	2.6	Putnam	4.4	4.4	3.2	4.2
Osage	3.8	3.7	4.8	4.5	Randolph	5.0	4.4	3.9	4.1
HOWELL-OREGON-SHANNON LMA	4.9	5.0	4.3	3.8	Reynolds	12.5	10.6	7.9	9.3
Howell	4.6	4.4	4.2	3.7	St. Clair	5.1	4.6	3.7	3.8
Oregon	4.2	4.3	3.8	2.5	Ste. Genevieve	4.9	4.3	4.5	3.6
Shannon	7.2	8.3	5.2	5.8	Saline	5.6	5.9	5.6	2.5
LAWRENCE-BARRY LMA	4.7	4.8	3.8	3.3	Scotland	4.1	4.0	3.0	3.1
Barry	4.8	4.7	3.5	3.6	Shelby	5.4	5.3	5.3	6.3
Lawrence	4.6	4.8	4.1	3.0	Stoddard	6.6	6.0	4.9	5.7
MARION-RALLS LMA	4.8	4.8	4.3	4.0	Stone	8.1	6.6	4.2	5.9
Marion	4.8	4.7	4.2	3.8	Sullivan	3.1	3.2	2.6	2.5
Ralls	4.8	5.0	4.5	4.5	Taney	4.7	3.7	2.7	3.4
PHELPS-MARIES LMA	3.3	3.1	3.1	2.6	Texas	7.1	7.9	6.3	5.8
Maries	4.1	3.7	3.9	3.1	Vernon	4.0	3.4	2.5	2.7
Phelps	3.1	3.0	2.9	2.5	Wayne	11.8	10.3	8.6	8.4
ST. FRANCOIS-WASHINGTON LMA	7.6	7.1	7.4	7.0	Worth	5.3	5.2	3.8	3.9
St. Francois	7.2	6.9	6.8	6.6	Wright	9.4	8.9	7.2	8.3
Washington	8.5	7.7	9.0	7.8					

NOTE: DATA FOR COUNTIES WITHIN MSAs/LMAs ARE DISAGGREGATED FROM MSA/LMA TOTALS.

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